



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/799,768	03/15/2004	Hitoshi Inoue	Q80062	8635

23373 7590 01/11/2005
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20037

EXAMINER

EVANISKO, LESLIE J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2854

DATE MAILED: 01/11/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/799,768

Applicant(s)

INOUE ET AL.

Examiner

Leslie J. Evanisko

Art Unit

2854

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 October 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 8-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 11-14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 8-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

3. Claims 8-10 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kasahara et al. (US 6,599,613) in view of Wedel et al. (US 6,573,877) and Ishikawa et al. (US 6,548,150). Kasahara et al. teach a method of manufacturing a display plate such as a watch or other measurement devices

Art Unit: 2854

comprising the steps of providing a substrate, depositing an ink permeative layer being made of a "heat resistant" material containing at least one of polyester or polyurethane material so as to cover at least one of an obverse or reverse face of the substrate, providing digital print data according to the design of the instrument panel and jetting ink to the ink permeative layer in accordance with the digital print data. Particular attention is invited to column 9, lines 55-62 and column 10, line 64 through column 14, line 9. Note that Kasahara et al. teach that the display plate manufactured by this method could include watches, various other measurement apparatuses, electronic apparatuses, mechanical apparatuses and devices, etc. in column 14, lines 2-5. Although Kasahara et al. is silent with respect to whether the display plate could specifically include *an instrument panel mounted on a vehicle*, the manufacture of a vehicle instrument panel using digital printing technology is well known in the art, as exemplified by Wedel et al. in column 4, lines 60-62 in particular. Therefore, since digitally printing vehicle instrument panels is well known in the art (as shown by Wedel et al.) and additionally, an instrument panel can broadly be considered to be a measurement device, electronic or mechanical device as set forth by Kasahara, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the method of Kasahara et al. to manufacture an instrument panel for a vehicle to provide rapid and cost-efficient personalized production of instrument panels for automobiles.

Additionally, note that Kasahara et al. teach the ink permeative layer is made from a coating solution including a water-soluble polymer such as polyurethane or polyester in column 7, lines 23-38. Although Kasahara et al. does not specifically teach the ink permeative layer includes 20 to 80% of urethane or polyester resin, note the use of a ink permeative layer including 20 to 80 % of at least one of urethane resin or polyester resin is well known in the art, as exemplified by Ishikawa et al. in column 6, line 42 through column 7, line 4. Furthermore, note that any material can be considered to be “heat-resistant” to some extent and therefore the materials of both Kasahara et al. or Ishikawa et al. meet this language. In view of this teaching, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the ink permeative layer of Kasahara et al. to include 20 to 80% of urethane resin or polyester resin as taught by Ishikawa et al. to provide an ink permeative layer that provides superior recording properties, superior light resistance, and superior surface strength (i.e., peeling resistance) for inkjet recorded images.

With respect to claim 9, note Kasahara et al. teach that manufacturing of display plates using an ink jet printer to allow for printing a small quantity of products with an image pattern according to the desire of the customer is well known in the art, as exemplified by Kasahara et al. in column 3, lines 61 through column 5, line 15.

With respect to claim 10, note Kasahara et al. teach an additional layer 16 may be provided between the substrate and ink receiving layer which at

Art Unit: 2854

least partially functions to improve adhesion between the substrate 10 and the ink receiving layer 17 and can therefore be considered "an adhesive layer" as broadly recited. See, in particular, column 6, line 51 through column 7, line 50. Note that, for example, making the coating layer 16 porous through a surface treatment (as described in column 7, lines 39-50) would inherently increase the adhesive properties between the ink receiving layer and substrate.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 11-14 are allowed.
5. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest a method of manufacturing an instrument panel mounted on a vehicle comprising all of the steps as recited, in combination with and particularly including, jetting ink to form a shape of a symbol to a first ink permeative layer provided over a first face of the substrate and jetting ink to exclude an area corresponding to the shape of the symbol to a second ink permeative layer provided over a second face of the substrate.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 8-10 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Art Unit: 2854

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Leslie J. Evanisko** whose telephone number is **(571) 272-2161**. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30 am-6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew H. Hirshfeld can be reached on (571) 272-2168.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Leslie J. Evanisko
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2854

lje
January 8, 2005